



Judicial Conduct Commission Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Commission Members

Stephen D. Wolnitzek, Chair
Covington

Judge Janet L. Stumbo
Prestonsburg

Judge Eddy Coleman
Pikeville

Judge David P. Bowles
Louisville

Joseph D. Adams
Bardstown

Michael T. Noftger
Somerset

Alternate Members

R. Kent Westberry
Louisville

Judge Jeff S. Taylor
Owensboro

Judge Mitch Perry
Louisville

Judge Karen A. Thomas
Newport

Commission Staff

Ms. Jimmy Shaffer
Executive Secretary

J. Rachel Noyes
Executive Assistant

Judicial Conduct Commission
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Frankfort, KY 40604-4266
Phone: 502-564-1231
Fax: 502-564-1233

Judicial Conduct Complaints:

In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the Commission considered 249 complaints. The Commission concluded 208 complaints, thirteen of which resulted in imposed sanctions:

- **Four Private Admonitions**
- **One Private Reprimand**
 1. [October 9, 2015](#) - Violations of Canons 1 and 3B(4).
- **Two Public Reprimands**
 1. [Judge Kenneth L. Easterling](#) - Violation of Canon 3B(4).
 2. [Judge Sheila A. Collins](#) - The Commission initiated formal proceedings against Judge Collins on January 11, 2016. Following a hearing, held on April 19, 2016, Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Final Order was entered on April 21, 2016, publicly reprimanding Judge Collins for violations of Canons 2A and 3B(4).
- **Three Suspensions**
 1. [Judge Cathy E. Prewitt](#) - 7-Day Agreed Order of Suspension, without pay, for violations of Canons 1, 2A, 3B(2),(7).
 2. [Judge Sam Potter](#) - 30-Day Agreed Order of Suspension, without pay, for violations of Canons 1, 2A, 3B(2),(4),(7),(8) and 4A(3).
 3. [Judge Steven D. Combs](#) - The Commission initiated formal proceedings against Judge Combs on April 27, 2015. Following a hearing, held on September 21, 2015, Judge Combs entered into a 6-month Agreed Order of Suspension, without pay, for multiple violations of Canons 1, 2A, 2D, 3B(2),(4),(8), 3E(1), 4A(1),(2),(3), and 5A(1)(c).
- **Temporary Suspension**
 1. Judge Olu A. Stevens - The Commission initiated formal proceedings against Judge Stevens on February 18, 2016. On April 18, 2016, Judge Stevens entered into an Agreed Order of Temporary Suspension, with pay, pending final adjudication. The temporary suspension remained in effect at the end of the fiscal year.
- **Temporary Retirement**
 1. Judge Lisa O. Bushelman - Order of Temporary Retirement issued May 2, 2016; effective May 3, 2016 to September 1, 2016. The temporary retirement remained in effect at the end of the fiscal year.

Forty-one complaints were pending at the end of the fiscal year. Twenty-six were received prior to the end of the fiscal year but too late to be considered in the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Fifteen were carried over after initial consideration.

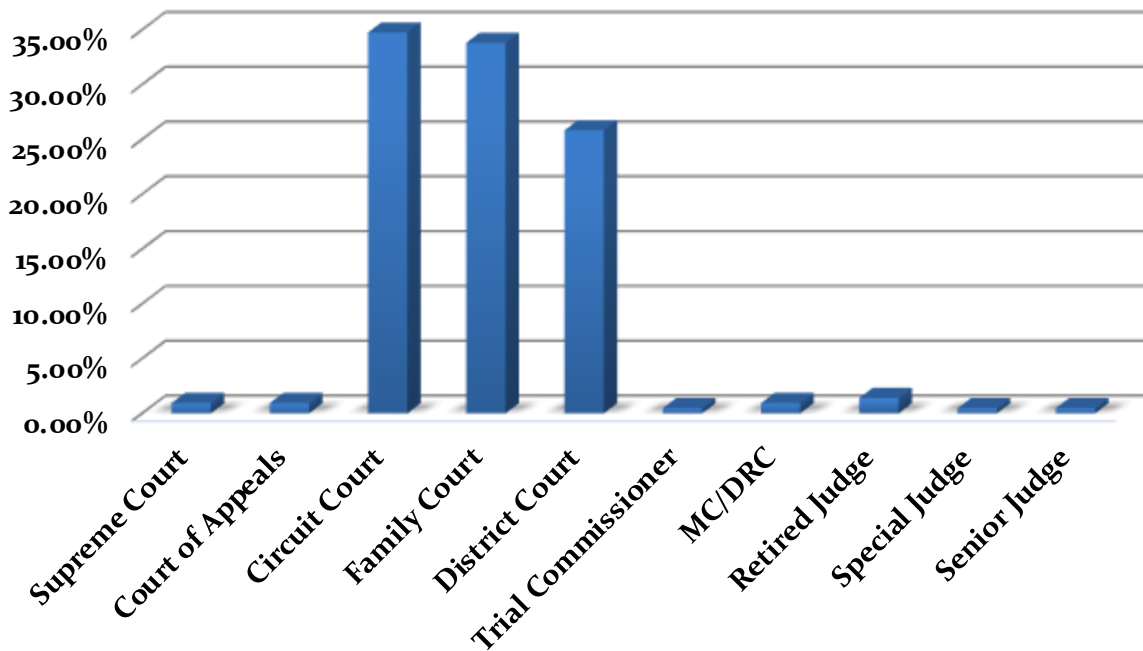
Complaints:

- **18** - Number of complaints pending final consideration at the beginning of the fiscal year
- **26** - Number of complaints pending initial consideration at the beginning of the fiscal year
- **205** - Number of new complaints received during the fiscal year
- **15** - Number of complaints pending final consideration at the end of the fiscal year
- **26** - Number of complaints pending initial consideration at the end of the fiscal year
- **208** - Number of complaints disposed of during the fiscal year

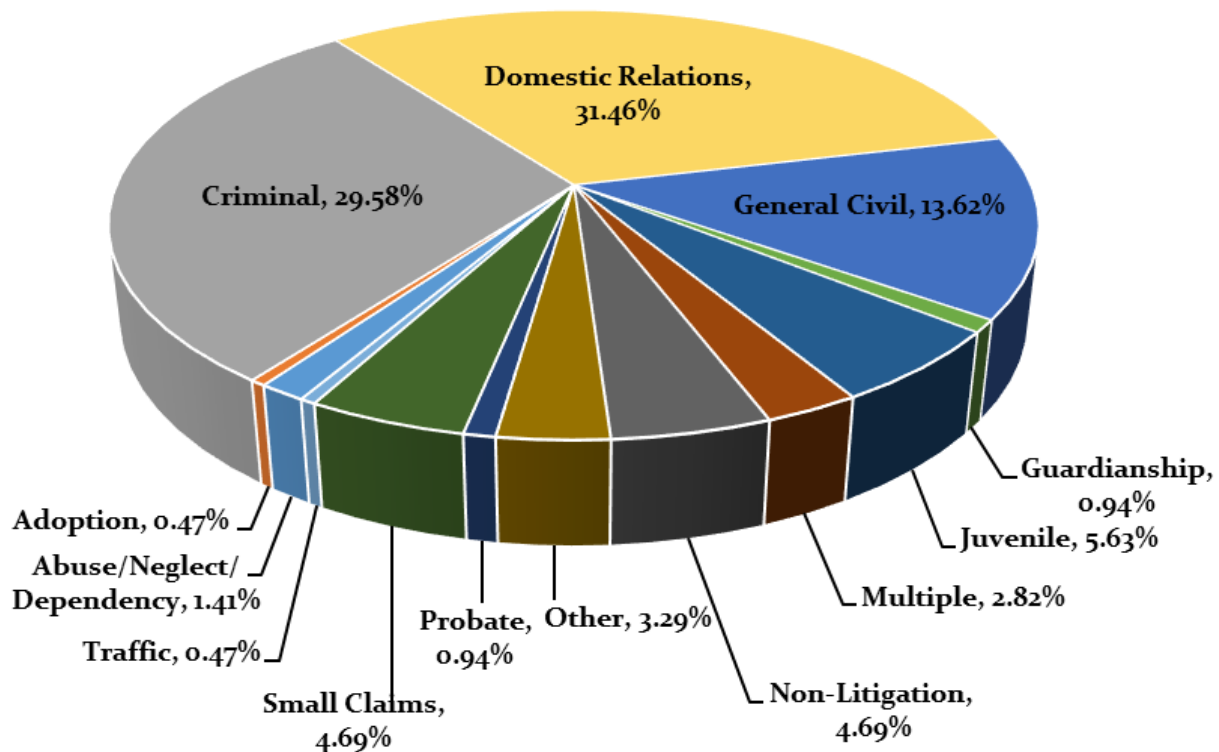
Jurisdiction:

Judicial positions in the Commonwealth of Kentucky within the jurisdiction of the Commission: 7-Supreme Court, 14-Court of Appeals, 95-Circuit Court, 51-Family Court, 116-District Court, 60-Trial Commissioner, 120-Master Commissioner, and 18-Domestic Relations Commissioner. Additionally, the Commission has jurisdiction over attorneys who have filed as candidates for judicial office.

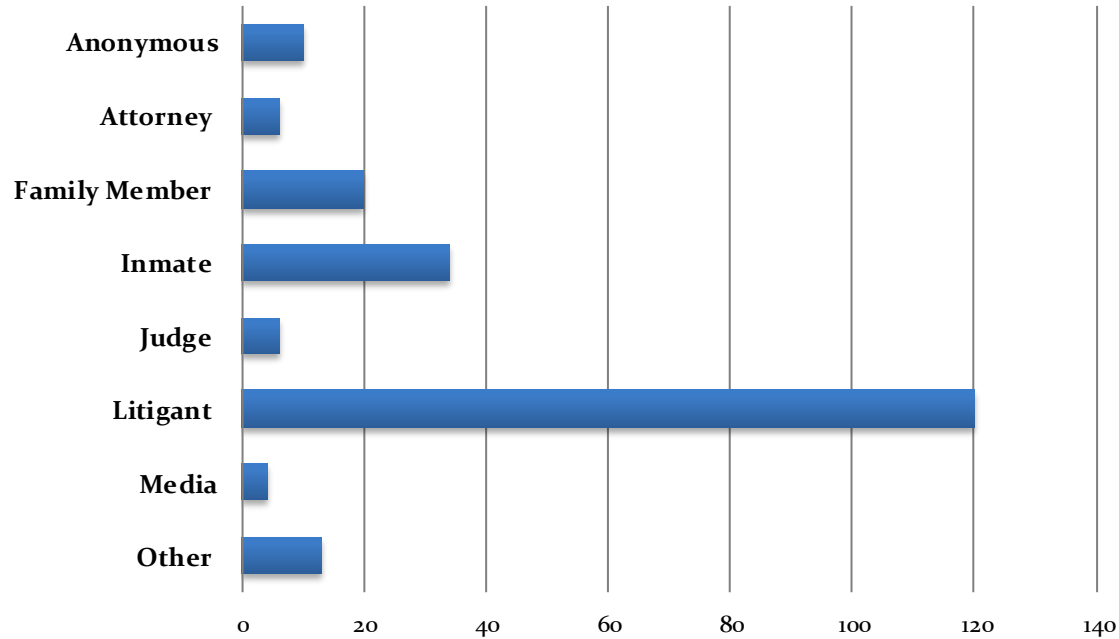
Number of Complaints by Judicial Position:



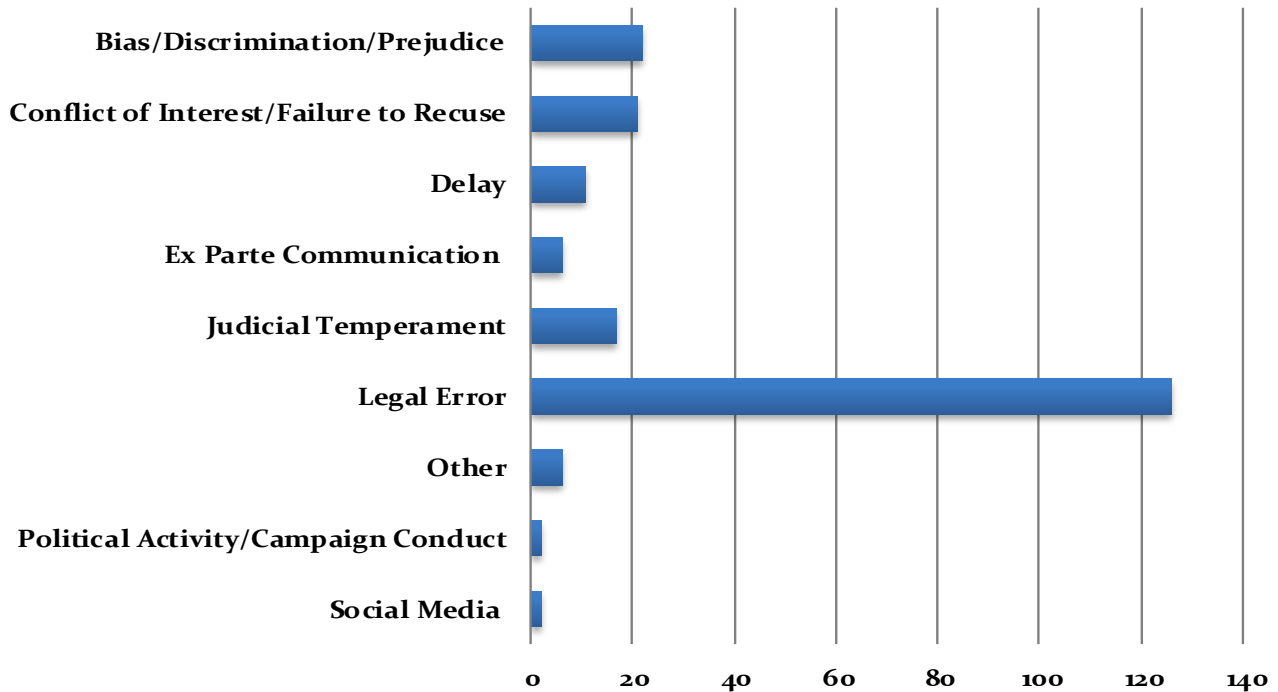
What Types of Proceedings Resulted in Complaints?



Who Filed Complaints?



What were the Allegations?

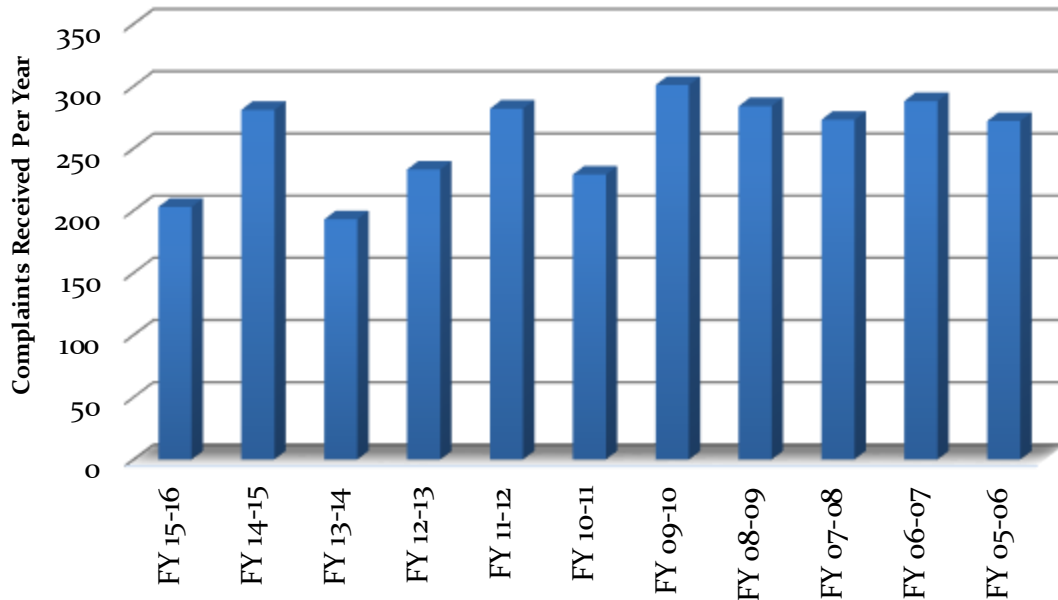


Complainant Representation in Court:

- ◇ 55.87% were represented by counsel
- ◇ 16.90% unknown (unspecified in the complaint)
- ◇ 15.96% appeared *pro se*
- ◇ 10.33% not applicable (non-litigation)
- ◇ 0.94% were represented by counsel, then appeared *pro se*



10-Year Complaint History



About the Judicial Conduct Commission

The mission of the Kentucky Judicial Conduct Commission is to protect the public, to encourage judges, commissioners and candidates for judicial office to maintain high standards of conduct, and to promote public confidence in the integrity, independence, competence, and impartiality of the judiciary.

The Commission accomplishes this mission through its investigation of complaints of judicial misconduct, wrongdoing or disability. In cases where judges, commissioners and candidates for judicial office are found to have engaged in misconduct or to be incapacitated, the Kentucky Constitution authorizes the Commission to take appropriate disciplinary action, including issuing admonitions, reprimands, censures, suspensions, or removal from office.

<http://courts.ky.gov/commissionscommittees/JCC/Pages/default.aspx>